NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE bulletin

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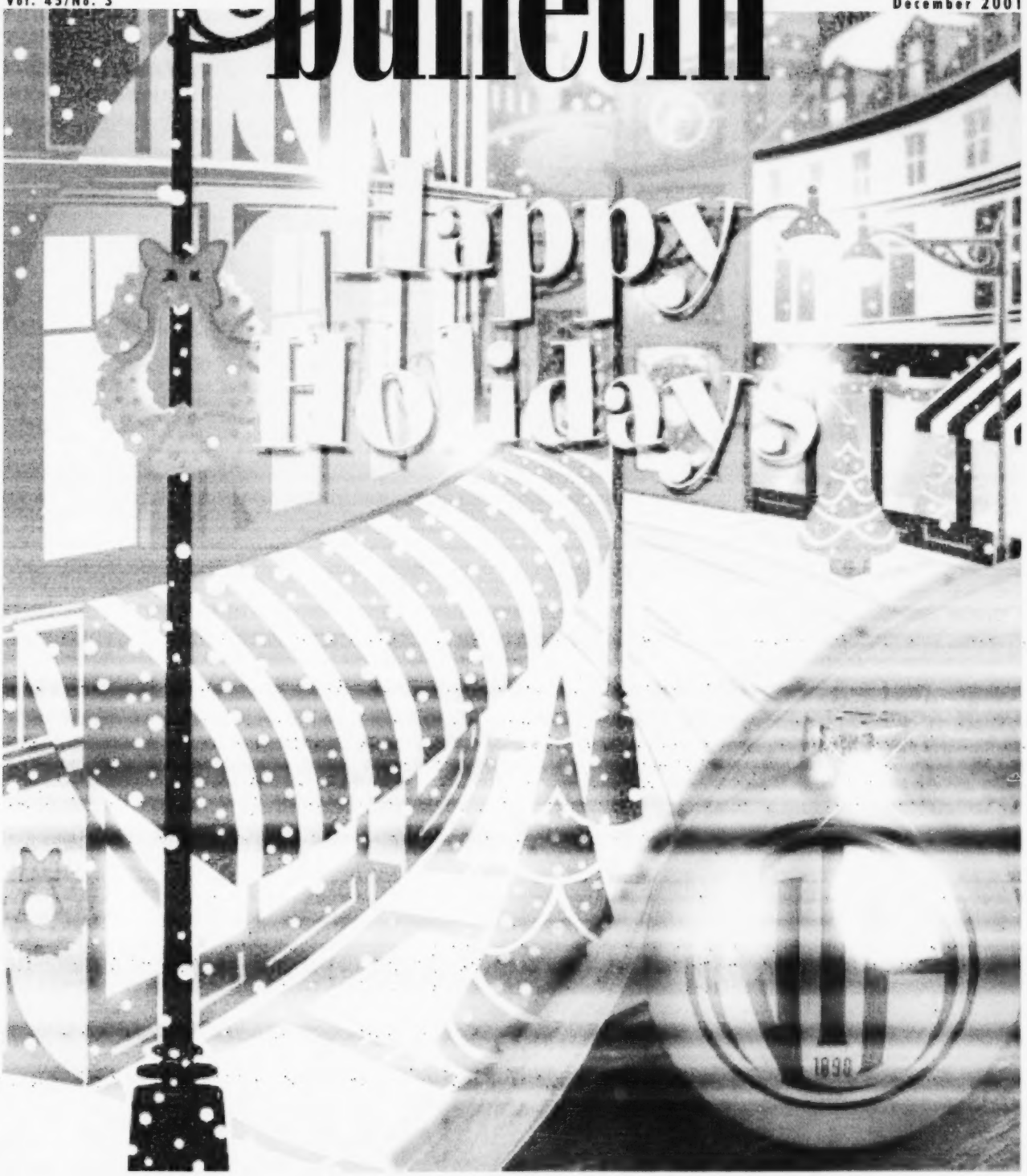

It Will Never Be the Same

by LESLEY-ANN BROWNE

I usually start buying Christmas presents in early October but this year I could not get in the mood. This Fall has been unlike any other that I have ever experienced. It seems that time has stood still in an attempt to comprehend recent world events. And suddenly the holiday season is upon us. My lack of enthusiasm also involves my daughter. She no longer believes in Santa. I feel a great deal of guilt about this as I am the one who told her there was no Santa Claus.

Before Christmas last year she began asking questions about the gifts brought by Santa. She did not understand why we gave presents to the Happy Tree and adopted a family for Christmas. She could not comprehend why Santa did not bring all kinds of goodies to them as well. We told her that we were helping Santa and that he could not do it all on his own. He brought presents to children but we were helping with adult items and the food. We told her that not everyone was as fortunate as we were and sometimes people needed help.

A week after Christmas she again asked me if I believed in Santa Claus. As per other occasions, my response was that I believe in the spirit of Santa. This was usually enough for her but not this time. She kept asking very poignant questions about the jolly old guy and finally asked me to "pinkie promise" that there was a Santa. I realized that this was serious business as you cannot lie over a pinkie promise. So, feeling pressured, I told the truth. This raised even more questions. What happened to the snack left for Santa? How did the carrots get from the table to the back garden? Where did the teeth marks in them come from? How come there were hairs from a white beard on the cup and red woollies from Santa's suit on the dining room chair? Where were all the presents stored? What happened to her letter to Santa? Who wrote the letter back? And on and on.

She cried and I cried because she was crying. Much to my chagrin there was no one to blame. She was not angry with the postal workers for writing Santa letters, or even at her Daddy for the facade. She was angry with me, her Mommy, buddy, confidant, and someone she could always trust, because I had fooled her for nine years.

Whatever happened to the obnoxious "know it all" kid who told everyone in his class that there was no Santa? I remember him. He saved my parents the horrible task of breaking the news. I did the best I could under the circumstances until I got to the question, more of an accusation really, "I suppose there is no Easter Bunny or Tooth Fairy either?"

Well I quickly ended that conversation. I had answered enough questions. I went to bed feeling terrible with a tremendous sense of loss. I felt responsible for ruining the excitement, the anticipation of Santa Claus. So the goal this year is to make Christmas just as special as every other year. But it will never be the same again. Now that she knows that Santa does not have to bring toys to all boys and girls her list will probably be a lot longer.

So as you prepare for the holiday season, I hope that your days will be ones of warm memories, happy gatherings and festivities. But take my advice, if a child asks you to pinkie promise about something, get out of there fast. Happy holidays!

THE bulletin

Lesley-Ann Browne
Editor

Michelle Lamarche
Editorial Assistant

Linda Babstock, John Bishop, Elliott Green, Louise King
Design • Printing • Distribution

Linda Farrell
Online Technician

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Tel: 709-726-3223; 1-800-563-3599
Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582
e-mail: labrowne@nlta.nf.ca
Internet Address: www.nlta.nf.ca

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Advertising inquiries should be directed to: Michelle Lamarche, Ext. 227
mlamarche@nlta.nf.ca

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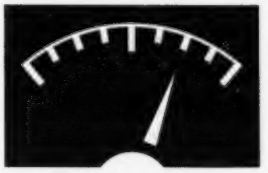
"I don't need many toys. I'm a slave to television."



Teacher Stress

Lynda Younghusband, M.Ed. Psych., is continuing her research into teacher stress. She is interested in interviewing teachers to get their experiences of work place stress. All contacts will be strictly confidential. If you are interested in participating please contact:

Lynda Younghusband
Tel: 709-737-7614
E-mail: lyounghu@mun.ca

Education Week

March 3-9, 2002

Subthemes:
The Power of …
- *Language*
- *Science/Math*
- *Humanities*
- *Physical Education*
- *Fine Arts*

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

MUSGRAVE HARBOUR

Summer program great learning experience for gifted student

Christa Barry, a Level I student at Gill Memorial Academy in Musgrave Harbour, attended the Peel Summer Academy 2001 at Memorial University from July 8 - 22, 2001. This was a summer residential program for intellectually gifted students in Grades 9 and 10 offered by the Peel District School Board in Ontario. Christa was the only student from Newfoundland and Labrador in the program. She joined 30 other students from mainland Canada and the United States.

The two-week program offers an ideal blend of activities for intellectual, social and emotional growth. Students had an opportunity to select three exploratory courses (non-competitive) in Sciences, Arts and Marine Technologies. Christa chose Archeology, Oceanography, and Newfoundland Ecology. These courses also included field trips to dinner theatre, a whale-watching tour and other cultural activities. Christa said she found the tour of Memorial University Campus to be particularly helpful as she plans to attend Memorial when she graduates from high school to pursue a career in the field of Science. It is also worth mentioning that while Christa really "dug" the program, she came to the realization that she does not wish to become an archeologist.

Christa Barry (standing) feeds the seals at the Marine Science Lab in Logy Bay during one of her field trips from the Peel Summer Academy.

Rocky Guy, Principal at Gill Memorial Academy, said Christa enjoyed the program immensely and made many friends during her stay. As for Christa, she said the Peel Summer Academy 2001 was a good learning experience for her. It was not only educational, but she got to meet many people from different areas.

BONAVISTA

Student wins local competition in International Peace Poster Contest

Andrea Boone, a Grade 7 student at Matthew Elementary School in Bonavista has taken the first step to becoming an internationally-recognized artist by winning a local competition sponsored by the Bonavista Lions Club.

Andrea's poster is among more than 325,000 entries submitted worldwide in the 14th Annual Lions International Peace Poster Contest. Lions Club International is sponsoring the contest to emphasize the importance of world peace to young people everywhere.

"I drew two doves holding a big flag with little flags inside held together by ribbons and on the bottom I had different people from different cultures with lights shining from them," said Andrea. Of all the posters created by Matthew Elementary School students, Andrea's entry best portrayed the contest's theme, "Lighting the Path to Peace".

School Principal, Aubrey Dawe, said he was impressed by the amount of effort exhibited by Matthew Elementary School students. "It's obvious these young people have strong ideas of what peace means to them. I'm so proud that the Lions Club was able to provide them with the opportunity to share their vision."

Andrea's poster now advances to round-two district competition where her entry will compete against entries from many other local Peace Poster Contests. "Andrea's poster will face stiff competition through the district round and in three more rounds of international competition if she is to be declared the International grand prize winner," Dawe said.

Ultimately, one grand prize winner will be selected from 24 international finalists. The grand prize includes a cash award and an all-expenses-paid trip for the winner and two family members to New York City for the awards ceremony at Lions Day with the United Nations. As merit award winners, the remaining 23 finalists will each receive certificates and a cash award.

"We're cheering for Andrea as her poster advances in the competition, and we hope that her vision will ultimately be shared with others around the world," Dawe said.

Andrea and two of her classmates, Alana Hicks and Sara Diamond (second and third place winners) were honored with the rest of the Grade 6 and 7 classes at Matthew Elementary School for their initiative, effort, and artistic skills by the Bonavista Lions Club on November 16, 2001 at a luncheon held at the Lions Club in Bonavista.

ST. JOHN'S

NLTA appointment notice

The Provincial Executive Council of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association is pleased to announce the appointment of Lloyd Hobbs to the position of Assistant Executive Director, effective November 19, 2001.

Lloyd has worked with the NLTA since 1997 as an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division. His responsibilities have included daily interactions with teachers in a broad range of employment related issues including collective agreement interpretation, grievances, arbitrations, teacher certification and Employment Insurance appeals, legal assistance and payroll matters. He has served as staff consultant to the Membership Benefits and Services Committee, the School Administrators' Issues Committee, the Workload Committee and the Electoral Committee.

Lloyd received his Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education from Memorial University of Newfoundland in 1978. In 1982 he completed a Diploma in School Resources Services and in 1987 he completed a Master of Education in Educational Administration. In 2001 he obtained a Master of Business Administration. As well, he has completed seminars in Industrial Relations and Negotiation Skills at Queen's University.

Beginning his teaching career at Goose High School, Goose Bay from 1978-1981, Lloyd has 19 years of teaching and administrative experience including two years at Jackson Walsh High School, Western Bay and 14 years at Persalvic Elementary School, Victoria. He has served as a branch president for the Carbonear Branch on several occasions and was a member of the Provincial Executive Council for 1993-1994.

In his new role, Lloyd is responsible for coordinating the daily operations of the Benefits and Economic Services Division and will assist the Executive Director in the overall coordination of NLTA programs and services.

Lloyd lives in Topsail with his wife Diana and their daughter Becky.

Lloyd Hobbs

Science Centre makes waves with the help of elementary students

This past November, the Newfoundland Science Centre launched the Marconi Wireless Workshops Provincial Outreach Program with the help of Grade 5 students from Holy Cross Elementary School in Holyrood.

This newest initiative of the Science Centre delivers hands-on interactive workshops to Grade 4 to 6 students all over the province. Students learn about the history of communications, how wireless works and make and test their own crystal radios. All without having to leave their schools!

Prior to the launch, the students from Holy Cross assembled their own crystal radios and were provided an opportunity during the proceedings to show off their creations for the dignitaries who were present for this momentous event. Virginia Hickey, Grade 5 teacher at Holy Cross Elementary, said her students thoroughly enjoyed the day. "This was an excellent opportunity for the students as part of the school curriculum. If we want to lead children to become more interested in the field of Science, then we need to offer more programs like this one." The students were also accompanied on the trip by Shawn Humby, Grade 5 Language/Math/Technology teacher at Holy Cross.

"Delivering hands-on programs to areas outside of St. John's is a major focus of the Science Centre and we are proud of our success across the province," said Executive Director, Patricia O'Neill. "The Wireless Workshop program will reach over 3,000 students by year end and will extend its reach even further into the new year as it travels to Labrador."

The $60,000 program has received $40,000 from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council's (NSERC) Promoscience Program and $20,000 from the Department of Industry, Trade and Rural Development as part of the Receiving the World initiative.

On hand to launch the event were the Honourable Beaton Tulk, Minister of Industry, Trade and Rural Development, and Dr. Angus Bruneau, Member of NSERC.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Information sessions offered on the legal system

This fall and winter representatives from the Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland (PLIAN) will be traveling across the province organizing presentations and information sessions about one of their current projects, YJEN (Youth Justice Exhibit Newfoundland). This project is aimed at raising public awareness about the law and legal issues and about the upcoming changes in Canadian Youth Justice legislation. These information sessions are a free service offered by PLIAN, and are usually 45 minutes to an hour in duration. PLIAN is currently booking presentations for schools.

PLIAN is a non profit organization with a mandate to provide the public with information about the law and the legal system. If you are interested in having a presentation for your class, or want some more information, please contact Public Legal Information of Newfoundland, Suite 101, Fortis Building, 139 Water Street, St. John's, NF, A1C 1B2, Tel: 709-722-2805, Fax: 709-722-0054, e-mail: info@publiclegalinfo.com.

Tourism career information sessions offered

Looking for tourism career information for your students? Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador has a presentation package available for delivery by industry professionals. This presentation, which is available free of charge, is designed to introduce students, career seekers, career changers and other interested groups to the tourism industry. It will help them explore career and entrepreneurial opportunities available within the industry and recommend additional sources of information for career planning, education, training and professional development. The presentation, which can be as long or as short as you require, is made up of several components: a presentation script with overheads; a video entitled *Tourism: You Decide How Far to Go*; interactive games and activities for students and teachers; information brochures; and posters.

For more information on this and other programs offered by Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador, please contact Joanne Gabriel-Janes, Career Awareness Coordinator, Tel: 709-722-2000 or 1-800-563-0700, Fax: 709-722-8104, or email: jgjanes@hnl.nf.net.

CANADA

Submissions sought for 2001-02 Mathieu Da Costa Challenge

The Mathieu Da Costa Challenge was launched by the Government of Canada in February 1996 and is administered by the Canadian Teachers' Federation. The Challenge invites elementary and secondary school students (ages 9 to 18) to research, discover and celebrate the contributions made by Canadians of Aboriginal and diverse ethnocultural origins to the building of Canada. It enables students to develop a more inclusive appreciation of Canadian citizenship and identity.

A maximum of nine awards (one per category) will be presented. The winning entries will be selected from the following categories: Best Essay/Short Story in English – Ages 9-11, 12-14, 15-18; Best Essay/Short Story in French – Ages 9-11, 12-14, 15-18; and Best Artistic Representation – Ages 9-11, 12-14, 15-18.

The entries should: show how specific individuals from Canada's diverse ethnocultural and Aboriginal population have contributed, through their significant accomplishments, to the building and development of Canada as a nation and a multi-ethnic society in which we all have a shared heritage; tell the stories or illustrate the achievements of people whose work has not been well recognized or celebrated in the history of Canada.

Entries will be judged on the following: (Artwork) – originality, clear presentation of theme, visual presentation; minimum 30 cm x 40 cm, maximum 43 cm x 55 cm, collage accepted; (Essay/Short Story) – good understanding of the theme, clarity of expression; evidence of critical thinking, originality, creativity; must be typed or legibly written and double-spaced, maximum of 500 words (Ages 9 - 14), maximum of $1,000 words (Ages 15 - 18). Entries that *do not* follow the theme, criteria and format will not be considered.

Each winner, accompanied by a parent/guardian, will attend an Awards Ceremony in Ottawa in February 2002. Winners will receive prizes and certificates of achievement.

Entries accompanied by the Consent Form must be sent to the Canadian Teachers' Federation and postmarked no later than January 25, 2002.

For further information contact the Canadian Teachers' Federation, 2490 Don Reid Drive, Ottawa, ON, K1H 1E1, Tel: 613-232-1505 or 1-866-283-1505 (toll free), Fax: 613-232-1886, e-mail: jgall@ctf-fce.ca or dsolo@ctf-fce.ca, website: www.ctf-fce.ca.

DONNA DUNPHY (PIRES), 1950 – 2001

On June 3, 2001, family, friends and colleagues were deeply saddened by the sudden death of Donna Dunphy, Challenging Needs teacher at St. Peter's Elementary School in Mount Pearl.

Donna was born and educated in Massachusetts, receiving her Special Education Degree from Rhode Island Teacher's College in Providence. She taught in Labrador, Fogo and Foxtrap, before taking her Challenging Needs position at St. Peter's Elementary.

Donna was a dear friend, mentor and a caregiver to students. She was an inspiration to her fellow teachers, support staff and parents. Through her understanding and care she continuously endeavored to ensure that her students were appropriately challenged to be the best they could be. Her priority was the well-being of each of her Special Needs students. There was always laughter and praise in Mrs. Dunphy's class. She fostered positive self-esteem and made sure that the children felt good about themselves.

Donna was a very generous, kind and giving person. She was one of those truly gracious individuals who made life so much more pleasant for everyone around her. She would frequently be seen going to classrooms delivering resources and materials she had gathered to assist her colleagues with their teaching. She was a dedicated teacher and a true professional who really loved her work. Her personable and positive nature enabled her to stand out as a teacher and be recognized as one who truly valued and appreciated each person. We feel very fortunate to have known Donna and we truly miss her.

We extend our love and heartfelt sympathy to Donna's mother, Mrs. Fern Pires; her daughters, Meaghon and Hannah; and her sisters, Sandra and Margaret Mary.

You are pulled from the wreckage of your silent reverie,
You're in the arms of the angel.
May you find some comfort here.

– Sarah McLachlan

(Submitted by St. Peter's Elementary School.)

ARLEIGH PADDLE, 1941 – 2001

Arleigh Paddle was born on Flat Island (later named Port Elizabeth), Placentia Bay. After high school he taught in Loon Bay and then in Port Elizabeth for two years before returning to Memorial University to complete his BA and BA(Ed) degrees. He also served as lay minister for the United Church in the communities of Herring Neck, Hillview, Appleton and Milton.

In 1970 Arleigh moved to Woody Point, Bonne Bay to teach at Bonne Bay Central High. In 1974 he became a Grade 5 teacher at Bonne Bay Elementary. In 1987 when the new elementary school was built, Arleigh was reassigned to teach Grades 4, 5, 7 and 8.

Arleigh retired in 1994 and will always be remembered as a dedicated, well respected and caring teacher who left a lasting influence on those fortunate enough to have known him. He was well loved for his sense of humor and his eloquence of speaking.

One of Arleigh's biggest accomplishments was being a founding member and the first President of the Table Mountain Branch of the NLTA. This and other accomplishments earned him the Bancroft Award from the NLTA for outstanding service to the teaching profession.

During his years in Woody Point, Arleigh was very involved in the community. He was an active member and officer of the Woody Point Cadet Corps, Lions Club, Library Board, Fire Brigade, Curtoglen PTA, Bonne Bay Recreation Committee, the Board of Management of St. Andrews United Church and was also a member of the St. Andrews Church choir.

Arleigh built his retirement home in Red Harbour, and although he took time to enjoy the outdoors he again dedicated himself to the community and the church.

Arleigh was a proud husband, father and grandfather. He was predeceased by his father Charles and son Boyd. He leaves to mourn his wife Gladys, three sons Gordon (Doreen), Paul (Beulah), Todd (Gwen), six grandchildren, his mother Ida, two sisters, and a number of sister-in-laws and brother-in-laws. He will be sadly missed by his family, relatives and the many co-workers, students and parents whose lives he has touched during his teaching career. As a fitting tribute to "Mr. Paddle" this poem comes to mind.

Eulogy for a Teacher

How will you be remembered
By those who came to you?
What will they say
The ones you have served,
When your teaching days are through?

"He never had a favorite."
"He smiled when he was down."
"He made me feel that I was loved."
All jewels in your crown.

And yet one priceless accolade
Out-sparkles all the rest.
A single phrase sums up the days:
"My teacher gave his best."

(Submitted by Irene Martin on behalf of co-workers and all members of the Table Mountain Branch of the NLTA, the parents and students of Bonne Bay Academy.)

Donna Dunphy

Arleigh Paddle

A Festive Holiday Season

After a very busy fall it is hard to believe that the holiday season is upon us. Another year has passed and we are almost half way through another challenging and demanding school year.

I have been travelling extensively since the beginning of my term of office in an attempt to visit as many schools and teachers in the province as possible. It has been a pleasure to travel to many areas of Newfoundland and Labrador and meet the teachers I represent. However, like you, I am looking forward to a much deserved break over the holiday season.

I trust you will take advantage of the holidays to rejuvenate, get in touch with family and friends and re-energize for the many challenges that await us in the new year.

On behalf of the Provincial Executive Council of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, I wish each of you a very Merry Christmas. May this holiday season be festive, joyous and peaceful.

Best wishes for a safe and happy New Year.

Wanda

I welcome this opportunity to offer all of you, from my new position as Executive Director, the very best of wishes for a festive and joyous Christmas season. It seems like only weeks ago that we were preparing for Christmas 2000 and yet, once again, we find ourselves in the month of December.

For all of you, after a very busy fall, it is important to now take some time to put aside the hectic and demanding pace of work and focus on some relaxation and rejuvenation. Christmas is a time to focus on family, friends and, yes, oneself as we give thanks for the positive things in our lives and in the lives of those close to us. Further, it is the time of year to consider the many who are less fortunate and how we may perhaps better focus our efforts to improving the future for all.

The tragic events of early this fall remind us of how fragile and tentative human life can sometimes be, and the importance of making our lives as meaningful and fulfilling as possible. Such occurrences also bring into focus the importance of each individual's role as a member of a caring society. Such reminders are particularly timely as Christmas approaches.

On behalf of all the staff at the NLTA, I wish you a joyous Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year. May the peace and love that are the essence of the Christmas message be with you throughout the holiday season and afterwards.

Ed Hancock

The More Things Change…

by EDWARD HANCOCK

The year was 1973. In April of that year, a brand new graduate from the MUN School of Education somewhat naively, and with no small amount of trepidation, began a teaching career. At almost precisely the same time, the Newfoundland Teachers' Association was obtaining the legal right to collectively represent teachers as bargaining agent in the arena of collective bargaining. The original round of negotiations under the Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act led to the first ever collective agreement for teachers in this province. The naive, but inquisitive, beginning teacher became interested in this process and curious about the procedures by which negotiators from the NTA, government and the school boards were determining components of a collective agreement affecting the rights, working conditions and income of teachers.

That curiosity led to a realization that to affect the process, one must be part of it. And that realization led to a decision to get involved – as a branch president (in 1974), a provincial executive member, a member and chair of various branch and provincial committees and a member of the provincial negotiating team. After 13 years of teaching, the opportunity arose in 1986 to apply for a position on the Administrative Staff of the Association. And the rest, as they say, is history.

After 11 years as an Administrative Officer and four years as Assistant Executive Director, I am honored and privileged to have the opportunity to serve the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association as your Executive Director. I consider my appointment to this position by the Provincial Executive on October 12, 2001, and the taking of office on November 1, as marking the ultimate moment of my career in education to date. The position of Executive Director of this Association has been occupied, throughout our history, by individuals of intellect, knowledge, experience and vision, and it is indeed a privilege to become the holder of the torch they have carried so well.

This occasion has allowed me to reflect on my 27 years of involvement with my Association and the issues and concerns that had been the subject of our interest over that time. That reflection leads me to the conclusion that the issues and challenges we confront at this point in our history are, in many cases, slightly modified incarnations of those which have confronted us over the past three decades. Our raison d'etre continues to include ensuring that teachers receive an appropriate level of compensation for their professional services; advocating for, and assisting in the delivery of necessary professional development and inservice training to teachers; speaking out on the necessity for a supply of human, financial and material resources to our classrooms; improving the work life and working conditions of teachers; maintaining a priority place for education in decisions on social policy; communicating to the public a thoughtful perspective on educational issues and teachers' position on those issues; ensuring the provision of appropriate supports and assistance to individual teachers who experience difficulty in their professional/personal lives; and promoting and maintaining teachers' involvement in their Association. These, among others, are the challenges which we must continue to meet by our collective action, and I look forward to continuing to work for teachers and for the Association in my new role as your Executive Director as we strive to do so.

If there is one message I would leave at this early stage in my new role, it would be that those who work for the Association at your provincial office will continue to put forth their utmost efforts on your behalf. I invite all members of this Association – new, mid-career and more experienced teachers – to do as that young teacher did back in 1974 and take an active role in your Association as we collectively strive to make its voice as representative of the wishes of its members as it can possibly be.

Edward Hancock is Executive Director of the NLTA.

Challenging the Words "Every Effort" in Clause 29.03

An Arbitrator's Decision

by LLOYD HOBBS

Your Association receives many calls from teachers inquiring about when substitutes are to be provided for colleagues who are absent from school. The answer is most often found in Clause 18.12 which states: *18.12 (a) When a principal, who has teaching duties, is absent from school in the performance of other duties, then a substitute teacher may be provided for those assigned teaching duties.*
b) In no event shall the number of days so substituted be more than three (3) times the number of teaching principals with any School Board.

And Clause 29.03 which states: *29.03 (a) Every effort shall be made to assure that substitute or replacement teachers are provided to replace teachers who are absent for valid reasons.*
b) A substitute teacher may be provided in instances where a teacher is assigned by a School Board to accompany groups of students during regular school hours on curricular related activities approved by the Board. The number of substitute days available to a Board under this Article during a school year shall not exceed one (1) for every eight (8) teachers employed by the Board.

When the word "may" is found in a contract it is considered "discretionary" language. This is the language of Clause 18.12(a) and 29.03(b). Thus, the employer is not bound to provide a substitute teacher in every instance. However, Clause 29.03 (a) states: *Every effort shall be made to assure that substitute or replacement teachers are provided to replace teachers who are absent for valid reasons.* This we would see as a "non-discretionary" clause. Therefore it is the NLTA's position that if a teacher is absent from his/her duties for valid reasons, a substitute teacher would be provided.

During October 1999, a grievance was filed against a school board by a group of teachers contending violation of Clause 29.03(a). This situation occurred when three Special Education teachers were granted leave to attend a board sponsored inservice. However, a substitute teacher was hired for only ¼ time and not for each individual teacher. The group of teachers further contended that their workloads were increased since those students who would have normally received help from the Special Education teachers were now required to remain with the classroom teachers for both instruction and supervision.

The employer felt that "every effort" does not say that substitute teachers will be procured (subject to availability and qualifications) in all cases where teachers are on approved paid or unpaid leave. The Employer further felt that if special needs children required special attention from a Special Education teacher, who was absent, what value is a substitute teacher to the child if the only thing the substitute teacher could do was to supervise their attention to some worksheet? Their argument was simply an issue of value of a service to the educational system that the substitute teachers could provide given the circumstances.

"...it is the NLTA's position that if a teacher is absent from his/her duties for valid reasons, a substitute teacher would be provided."

The Association's position was not to distinguish between types of teachers and that if a teacher is absent for valid reasons "every effort" must be made to replace that teacher. The employer does not have the flexibility to consider its budget, the value of a substitute to the educational system or other alternative placements for the students, when determining whether to hire a substitute under Clause 29.03(a).

In its overview of evidence the Arbitration panel wrote: *In our view, "every effort" means a deliberate, demonstrable, and reasonable attempt to assure the provision of a substitute or replacement teacher for any teacher who is absent for valid reasons. We are also of the view that a substitute teacher should be one who is reasonably qualified and available. We are further satisfied by the plain meaning of Article 29.03(a) that the obligation placed on the Employer effectively precludes it from exercising any discretion to consider levels of pedagogical*

utility or budgetary factors as reasons not to provide a substitute for a discretionary leave.' Those considerations may be relied on when determining whether or not to grant leave in the first place, but may not be relied on to decide whether to make every effort to provide a substitute. Any doubt about the Employer's authority under Article 29.01 to consider such factors is clearly removed by the requirement of Article 29.03(a).

A further issue brought forward by the employer as an objection to the grievance was the issue of estoppel - a legal bar to alleging or denying a fact because of one's own previous actions or words to the contrary. The Board felt that past practice had allowed them to use discretion in hiring substitutes within the district. The Association provided evidence of its clear interpretation of Article 29.03 and its communication of this to its members, as well as a list of past grievances filed on this issue.

In addressing this matter the Arbitration panel stated: *On balance then, we find that there is insufficient proof of representation by conduct by the Association which would establish an estoppel in these circumstances. We further find that the conduct of the teachers did not bind the Association to an estoppel which intended to continue the Employer's practice until the expiration of the Collective Agreement. The Association would have had to acquiesce in the teachers' conduct to create that result. There was no such acquiescence.*

Your Association's interpretation of Article 29.03 was upheld during the Arbitration process and we will continue to ensure that substitutes are provided when teachers are absent for valid reason. If you experience circumstances where you feel this or any other section of the Collective Agreement has been violated, please contact an Administrative Officer of the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Lloyd Hobbs is Assistant Executive Director with the NLTA.

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Substitute Teachers and the Government

Money Purchase Pension (GMPP) Plan

by PERRY DOWNEY

As you are probably aware, part-time and/or casual employees working with the various departments of the Provincial Government are required to pay pension premiums to the Government Money Purchase Pension Plan (GMPP). Currently, employees pay pension premiums at a rate of 5% of gross salary. The amount is then matched by the Provincial Government and deposited into individual GMPP Plan accounts.

"All accounts... cost the plan an administration fee of $2.00 per month. As a result, the annual administration costs for inactive accounts currently is assessed at approximately $120,000."

Prior to September 1, 2001, TD Canada Trust administered the Plan and provided any necessary investment information and/or assistance to individual plan members. During the same period of time, the investment firm of Phillips, Hager and North was contracted to invest the monies of the Plan and to provide investment advice. Effective September 1, 2001, Canada Life acquired the holdings of the Group Business from TD Canada Trust and thus has assumed the responsibility for the GMPP Plan. Phillips, Hager and North will continue to provide investment service as in the past. As a result, teachers who have paid into the GMPP Plan or who are currently employed as substitute teachers in the province will soon receive their account statements from Canada Life, and not TD Canada Trust. The transfer of the GMPP Plan assets from TD Canada Trust to Canada Life will not affect individual accounts nor the funds accumulated in the Plan.

As of March 31, 2001, there were 20,451 members in the GMPP Plan. Of the 20,451 individual member accounts on record, approximately 5,000 are currently classified as "inactive". An account is deemed to be inactive if there has not been a transaction within the account in the past 12 months. All accounts, both active or inactive, cost the plan an administration fee of $2.00 per month. As a result, the annual administration costs for inactive accounts currently is assessed at approximately $120,000. In its continued attempts to reduce this overall cost, the GMPP Plan Committee, through the Pensions Division, is once again attempting to contact individuals whose accounts have become inactive. Therefore, if you have been a substitute teacher in the province at any time since 1989 but have not contributed to the GMPP Plan during the past 12 months, (i.e. have not substituted during the past 12 months), we request that you contact the Pensions Division in order to receive information regarding the options available to you with respect to the monies held in your account. If you have recently talked with officials at the Pensions Division regarding your inactive account, you can ignore this request. Officials at the Pensions Division can be contacted at 1-709-729-3931/3932.

Canada Life officials are currently planning a series of information sessions to be delivered to Plan members during early Spring 2002. As more information and details become available, updates will be provided in *The Bulletin*. If you are a teacher currently employed in the province and know of any persons who might have substituted since 1989 we would appreciate it if you would pass on this information to them.

Perry Downey is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

CEC Outstanding Achievement Award

Teacher Recognized for Excellence in Special Education

The Newfoundland chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has announced that Patricia Bouzanne is one of the first recipients of the first annual CEC Outstanding Achievement Award. This award is designed to acknowledge outstanding contribution to the well-being of exceptional children and youth, innovation of teaching strategies, dedication to the integration of exceptional children, dedication to the creation of positive learning environments; and an ability to inspire students and co-workers.

"The selection committee shares the opinion of her nominators in describing Patricia as a 'national treasure' and the [CEC] says they are proud to be able to present her as an example of excellence in the special education field."

Patricia is a special educator at Xavier Junior High School in Deer Lake where she has earned the respect and admiration of the community at large. In over 28 years of professional service in the classroom her co-workers describe her as "self-sacrificing, dedicated, positive and committed to the individual growth of her students". Patricia has developed numerous innovative programs to meet the unique and challenging needs of her students. She also leads her staff in professional development for exceptional students and remains a strong advocate for quality programming. Hughie Butt, Principal of Xavier Junior High School, reports that Patricia is often the first to arrive at the school and the last to leave, often extending her commitment to her students long past the end of the workday. "Despite this exhaustive work schedule she prioritizes a caring and sincere relationship with each child and co-worker, looking for ways to enhance their self-esteem," he says. The selection committee shares the opinion of her nominators in describing Patricia as a "national treasure" and the Council for Exceptional Children says they are proud to be able to present her as an example of excellence in the special education field.

Patricia shares this year's award with Barbara Hopkins, who is retired from the Faculty of Education at Memorial University where she worked in the area of special education for over 20 years.

Patricia was presented with her award on November 9, 2001 at a reception held by the CEC at the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Patricia received a plaque acknowledging the award and her name, along with Ms. Hopkins, will be those first entered on a separate plaque to be erected by the Faculty and displayed in the G.A. Hickman Building. Their outstanding work is an example of the excellence that this province has in this field and will serve as motivation for others.

l-r: David Philpott, President, CEC; Barbara Hopkins; Patricia Bouzanne; and Dr. Wayne Nesbitt, Vice-President, CEC.

Alex Hickey, Co-ordinator of the Virtual Teacher Centre, provides a brief synopsis of the VTC experience.

Senator George Furey brings greetings on behalf of Minister Jane Stewart.

Education Minister Judy Foote addresses the audience.

Information & Communication Technology

NLTA Officially Launches Virtual Teacher Centre

The NLTA Virtual Teacher Centre was officially launched on November 23, 2001 at the Delta St. John's Hotel by Senator George Furey, the Honourable Judy Foote, Minister of Education, and Winston Carter, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. The official launch was attended by over 20 invited guests representing the key educational stakeholders, the NLTA Joint Council consisting of Branch Presidents and Provincial Executive Council, as well as Administrative and Support Staff of the NLTA.

The Virtual Teacher Centre is designed to:

- provide teachers throughout Newfoundland and Labrador with an ICT skill set through face-to-face training, combined with ongoing sustained follow up through the Virtual Teacher Centre;
- provide just-in-time workplace training to teachers as determined by teachers and their employers;
- narrow the digital divide felt by many teachers, particularly those employed in rural and isolated communities;
- empower teachers to develop and contribute content to the VTC, their community and other agencies, as well as apply their abilities to personal, collaborative and organizational learnware development;
- provide a peer-reviewed, online publishing environment for educators to contribute to the Canadian presence on the Internet;
- contribute to community development/viability by developing advanced ICT skills among teachers and their students in an effort to prevent the marginalization of rural communities;
- establish a broad base of knowledge and expertise which can in turn provide leadership to the community and contribute to the social and economic development of the community in a knowledge-based economy; and
- encourage and enable private sector development of commercially marketable education software products in collaboration with the VTC.

Professional growth learning activities at the Virtual Teacher Centre emphasize the interactive capabilities of the Internet, interaction between and among individuals, between users and technology and interactivity between diverse bodies of knowledge and content on the Web.

Features currently available at the VTC

Special Interest Council Web Sites. Each of the 20 special interest councils will have their own dedicated web site with links to web content appropriate to each council, a password-protected discussion forum, and teaching and learning resources.

Teachers Abroad is a place for Newfoundland and Labrador teachers in other countries to stay in touch with home and to forge professional and educational links among themselves and with teachers in the province.

Life in the Classroom seeks to document the many hilarious anecdotes that teachers have gleaned over the years. Teachers are invited to contribute at any time.

Teaching Jobs in Newfoundland and Labrador is a service free to school districts to list teaching positions open within their districts.

Digital Portfolio is an automated process which documents a registered user's learning activities, assigns professional development credits and permits the user to maintain a running record of their professional development experiences at the Virtual Teacher Centre.

Discussion Forum presents educators a place to engage in ongoing dialogue with colleagues on contemporary issues in education.

Quick Reads provide an opportunity to the teacher who wishes to find out about a topic in just a few minutes. These are single articles with an accompanying web search with a list of further content on that topic.

Investigations are designed to permit the learner to spend an extended block of time interacting with a topic or issue.

Tutorials are instructional web pages aimed at acquiring a particular skill such as using a piece of software.

Mediated Study Groups put a group of learners interested in a particular topic in touch with an expert who

Members of the audience watch with interest as the Virtual Teacher Centre is unveiled.

leads them through an interactive learning experience that is paced to the schedule and needs of the group.

Learning Centres are places where teachers with a common interest such as art, music or science can go to find web content related to their subject area.

Hot Sites will highlight web sites of particular interest to teachers on a wide range of topics.

District Discussion Forums are forums dedicated to each school district within which they may conduct both open and closed discussions on matters of interest to the district.

Links to a wealth of professional sites, teacher organizations and Canadian content on the Web.

Electronic Seminars are an opportunity to engage in in-depth dialogue with colleagues and experts on topics through the posting of papers and responses to those papers.

Things to look for down the road at the VTC

Learning Strings are interactive learning experiences where a learner will be able to dig deeply into a topic or issue to get at the research and underpinnings which make up that topic.

Learning Teams are established among a small group of teachers with a common focus and need such as implementing a new language arts course. Participants establish their own goals and set their own schedules for online activities. Content is provided by a variety of sources including the Department of Education through its authorized curriculum, school districts through program specialists and through teachers themselves. Mentorship and leadership is provided through the school district.

Web Casts will bring high profile educators online to discuss timely topics and issues. Each webcast will be accompanied by a chat option for those watching which permits concurrent interaction with each other, a threaded discussion on the particular topic, links to pages of web content on the topic being addressed as well as an opportunity for participants to pose questions to the speaker.

Web Quests are teacher and student created web-based learning investigations. Teachers are being challenged to create and post their own professional development web quests and to work with their students to utilize the web quest format as learning devices within the authorized curriculum. These will be posted and shared.

Publishing Centre will encompass a peer-reviewed, continuous professional journal and a feature called the "Dumbledore", a place for teachers to publish to the web through the VTC, a wide variety of content ranging from an opinion piece to a multimedia production,

Teacher Swap Shop will provide classroom teachers a space to share everything from teaching tips to units of study.

Workshop Filing Cabinet is intended to act as a repository to share such things as workshop ideas, resources, presentations, templates, articles, handouts, ice-breaker activities and many other things.

Lesson Plan Database is a collection of searchable lesson plans developed by classroom teachers in this province based upon the learning outcomes in the provincially authorized curriculum. These lessons must be classroom-tested and will be vetted through the Special Interest Councils to ensure they meet the highest standards.

Conference Speaker Database will be comprised of information on speakers that teachers have heard at conferences, seminars or presentations with all of the pertinent information for contacting them.

Online Newsletter will focus on such things as how teachers are using technology in the classroom, innovative approaches to online learning and upcoming events at the VTC.

For further information about the Virtual Teacher Centre, contact Alex Hickey, Co-ordinator, Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 (toll free), ext. 256, E-mail: ahickey@nlta.nf.ca, or check out the VTC website at www.virtualteachercentre.ca.

NLTA President, Winston Carter, acknowledges the Virtual Teacher Centre as the first of its kind in Canada.

Senator George Furey (left), Education Minister Judy Foote, and NLTA President Winston Carter officially launch the NLTA Virtual Teacher Centre.

The Teacher Induction Program

The Gifts and the Givers

by BEVERLEY PARK

It's the season for gift-giving and although we all know (or we should!) that it's better to give than to receive, there's always a struggle, among even the most generous of us, as to what to give. Admit it! There are some on your gift list for whom anything will do – either because the gift is but a token or by the nature of the receivers, they will genuinely be happy with any gesture of giving. Then, there are others to whom we truly wish to give something special – something that will be meaningful and which will touch them in a real way. Sometimes we find that gift in a shopping mall, or at an exclusive boutique; sometimes we use our talents to craft something, and we mark it as "made especially for you."

I would like to draw your attention to another very special kind of gift ... one that cannot be packaged, cannot be tied with a bow or cannot be put under a tree. It does, however, involve craftsmanship and sharing of talent, and the gift is indeed special and touches people's lives in a very real way. It is the gift of mentoring. Through the Teacher Induction Program, teachers throughout this province have agreed to give their gift of knowledge and skill which they have gained through experience of practicing the profession. The beginning teachers who are receiving this, even if they may not know it yet, will likely benefit from the rewards of this gift for years to come. Through the sharing of their ideas, the art of empathetic listening, the assistance in process of reflection for the improvement of practice and through the invaluable gift of time, mentors play a role in making the entire teaching profession stronger. So, while the gift is most visibly marked for the beginning teacher, it is a gift to all of us, the entire learning community.

In keeping with the gift-giving tradition, it is also customary that those on the receiving end often reciprocate. The same is true in this case. The beginning teacher has much to offer the mentor. S/he brings a new perspective, the freshness of a new start, all packaged in energy and the promise of youth. Often through mentor training workshops, mentors shift the focus from what they can give to benefits they have reaped... focusing on how they feel valued professionally, how they have become more reflective in their own practice, how they've learned a new way of doing something, discovered a new resource, or how they have found new motivation through working with a junior colleague. It is reminiscent of those occasions when we see gifts being exchanged and we hear, "It's just what I really needed or wanted!" and you know it's just the "right" thing.

In this province the Teacher Induction Program was introduced three years ago. Over that period, Boards have adapted and adopted the model and a number of beginning teachers have been supported in their entry into the profession by mentors. As the demographics of the profession change and we see more and more teachers at the entry level, our hope is that the program will grow. The NLTA is proud to have initiated the program and is pleased with the collaboration of school districts, the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association, Memorial University and the Department of Education in implementing the mentoring model in the field.

We continue to support districts through provision of direction, training and resources. Still, the model truly works when the mentor and the protégé sit together to unpack their learning, to share their gifts. On your behalf, I offer a heartfelt thanks to each of you, mentors and those being mentored, for the generosity of your gifts to each other and to all of us.

For more information on the Teacher Induction Program, on mentoring and mentor training, please contact Beverley Park, Professional Development Division, Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 (toll free), ext. 244, e-mail: bpark@nlta.nf.ca.

Beverley Park is Administrative Officer, Professional Development Division, with the NLTA.

Project Overseas 2001

My Teaching/Learning Experience in Malawi

by MARIE VATERS

The summer of 2001 was a teaching/learning experience I will always remember. In February I was informed that I had been selected, along with 52 other Canadian teachers, to participate in Project Overseas. I would be one of eight CTF members working in Malawi, Africa. During the next four months I eagerly read information on the social, economic, environmental and cultural context of that country. I received the required vaccinations and called last year's participants for tips on preparing for the classes I would be teaching. Through e-mails and phone calls, my fellow participants and I became acquainted. The three-day training program in Ottawa in early July began as we put personalities to faces. The sessions focused on creating efficient group dynamics and preparing for the inevitable challenges of cross-cultural living. Two weeks later our team traveled from Toronto through Amsterdam, to Nairobi, and on to Malawi, Africa.

Marie Vaters meets a group of children outside the town of Dedza.

In Lilongwe, we were heartily welcomed by the Executive of the Teachers' Union of Malawi. There was a special dinner in our honour and we settled into our clean and comfortable lodgings – luxurious by Malawi standards. Work began the next day; we had an inservice, met and planned classes with our co-tutors and toured the Canadian International Development Agency and several schools.

All the reading I did could never have prepared me for the diverse nature of this small country with the big heart. Natural beauty was contrasted with the ugliness of sickness and death; the danger created by poverty was contrasted with the openness and simplicity of a kind and gentle people. The growing pains of a country in its change from a dictatorship to democracy was contrasted with the strength of character of its people. The richness of culture and spirit was contrasted with the lack of the bare essentials of life.

The goal of Project Overseas is to assist developing teacher organizations; however, the expectations and objectives of each individual project vary, depending on the need of the particular country. In Malawi, the students involved were in fact primary school teachers themselves, with varied levels of training, ability and economic standing. They traveled from 33 school districts to Lilongwe, Malawi's capital, during their four-week winter break to participate in this inservice to upgrade their academic (Malawi School Certificate of Education) standing. Their quest for knowledge was admirable. I watched as some of these 450 teachers arrived – none came in their own vehicles. Some women carried babies on their back while another child or two followed barefooted to care for the baby during class time. These women walked gracefully by in jitingie (traditional dress) with bundles balanced perfectly on their head. Their bundles contained clothing and other necessities for the duration of the program. This included an enamel cup and plate for the three

meals a day (nsima, chicken, broth, and bread) for which these student-teachers lined up, bed sheets and a change of clothes, but not lap-top computers, calculators or texts, that one might assume the norm for three weeks of intense study; these are luxuries. I later learned that some came with only enough money for the one way trip, trusting God for a way to return to their home villages.

We started classes at 7:30 a.m. and finished at 5:30 p.m. It was dark by 6:00 p.m., so any exploring was better done during lunch hour in relative safety. I worked with three Malawian teachers to deliver English Language and Literature courses to the student-teachers. I came to admire these dedicated, hard-working professionals who had practically no financial possibility of continuing their own education – this because salaries are minimal and care for an extended family is the norm when brothers or sisters pass on as a result of the devastation of AIDS. About half of the teaching population is HIV positive or dying of AIDS, and each day there are teachers who succumb to this dreaded disease.

"These are a people for whom education is life, not just a preparation for life. Their desire to further their education is equated with a desire to survive. Gifts of the simplest tools of learning – a pen, pencil or ruler are considered precious."

On the weekends we traveled to get glimpses of Africa outside the classroom. The wildlife viewed on a river and land safari was breathtaking. The brown mud of the dry season provided a background for all images of village life: outdoor markets; circles of smiling children singing and dancing; families walking home in tattered clothes with scraps of brush on their heads after a hard day's work at a tobacco plantation; a boy pushing a wheelbarrow of bricks; a librarian proud of the new seats he installed in his library – old planks lodged on bricks; smells of smoke from the outdoor cooking fires. I took the opportunity to attend worship services on Sundays. The village churches had no doors, no glass windows, and many women sat on bamboo mats nursing babies, listening to a sermon translated to Chewa, after singing and dancing in worship. My western idea of the "church" as a building seemed rather confining. Without much by way of material possessions, they could afford to be spiritual.

My task was to teach Julius Caesar. Of the more than 450 students, only about 10 had read the play or

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had the possibility of access to it. Now, I understood the constant reminder in Ottawa of the value of being flexible in your teaching. However, all were open, eager to learn, completely attentive and appreciative. This experience showed me there is a difference in what you desire as a resource to teach with and what is required to teach. What is most important is enthusiasm for what you are doing, belief in the value of it and likewise this must be mirrored on the part of the student. When this occurs, much can be accomplished.

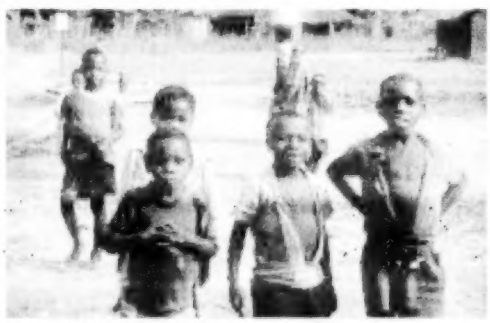
"It is only when we live with those who have nothing that we see that we are very fortunate, even in our older schools that are not luxurious by any means."

I talked to my classes about Julius Caesar and the fear among some of the Romans of autocratic rule. They taught me about what it was like to live in a dictatorship and about the pain of change even when change is positive. Moving from a dictatorship to a democracy is not done without some confusion and pain. I told them Caesar was loved by some people and possessed some good qualities. Some argued they were not as hungry under Banda's dictatorial regime. I told them the Romans were easily swayed, unsure of whom to follow. They responded that sometimes perceived agreement of policies is but a facade as opposition could mean being reported and imprisoned. I told them Caesar had a right-hand man. They taught me about their John Tamba and what it was like to be afraid to express yourself and your opinions for fear of punishment, even death. I told them that women were oppressed in the time of Caesar. Some ladies told me how confining it had been before 1994, when it was illegal to wear dress pants, and that wearing a dress above the knee was punishable. I told them that Brutus had the intention of killing the spirit of dictatorship. They explained to me that sometimes it takes people's minds and ideas far longer to change than it does for a government. At the end of the program, a video obtained from the American Embassy was presented to the students in the evening as a way of reinforcing the events and themes of the play. Over 400 students showed up to watch the play on one small television – some who would have watched television for the first time.

I feel what I offered was of benefit to these hardworking, grateful, self-motivated people. The stories of their struggles of the past and their hopes for a better tomorrow certainly inspired me. These are a people for whom education is life, not just a preparation for life. Their desire to further their education is equated with a desire to survive. Gifts of the simplest tools of learning – a pen, pencil or ruler are considered precious. The latest innovations in technology and resources can make it easier to be a good teacher, but these people are teachers at heart. Huge classes and lack of resources is the norm, yet these people are fervent believers in education.

It is easy to slip back into the old routines, but my experience will be for naught. A phrase that comes forcefully to mind when I start to complain about text books arriving late or reduction of preparation periods and so on is, "It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness". It is only when we live with those who have nothing that we see that we are very fortunate, even in our older schools that are not luxurious by any means. That is not to say we should not strive towards better, but rather benefit to the fullest from what we already possess as we work to improve. We have so much that we can do to empower these people to help themselves. It is energizing to give. I took the opportunity at the end of this fantastic experience in the "warm heart of Africa" to climb to the top of Kilimanjaro, "the roof of Africa". What do I think? The world is vast but not so big that your contribution or mine will not be meaningful and perseverance will bring positive results. Keep your enthusiasm because even the smallest gesture can make a difference.

I wish to thank the NLTA for the privilege of representing our Association in this opportunity to give to and receive from these wonderful people. I encourage their sponsorship of this project. To the seven other Canadian teachers I interacted with I say "zikomo." These dedicated individuals remind me that we still have much to learn from each other. To my colleagues at my home school of Holland's Memorial, I commend their concern for students and energy for teaching in our small, rural school. They confirm my belief in the potential of our province's teachers.



A group of children in a typical Malawian village.

If you would like to know more about the "Malawi experience," you may contact me. I would be pleased to respond to your inquiries or share my stories and show you some pictures over Muzulu coffee.

Marie Vaters teaches at Holland's Memorial in Norris Point and can be reached at 709-458-2846 (h), 709-458-2251 (s), or via e-mail: marievaters@hotmail.com.

Traveling Teachers' Institute

An Experience of a Lifetime

by HELEN COLEMAN

Give up a week of my summer break to attend an institute? You bet! This past summer I attended the Traveling Teachers' Institute, sponsored by the Department of Education, School Districts #2 and #3, the NLTA, Red Ochre Regional Economic Development Board, Gros Morne Cooperating Association, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and Western Newfoundland and Labrador Field Unit – Parks Canada agency. I gathered with 28 teachers from across the province for a week of learning, sharing and comradeship like no other.

On August 19, 2001 participants gathered in Rocky Harbour to set the course for the week and meet our fellow peers. There were people from Parks Canada and the Department of Education as well. During the week we traveled along the Northern Peninsula learning first hand about the wonderful geology and rare flora and fauna of our beautiful coastline. We learned about the exciting work and discoveries of Dr. James Tulk, discover of the prehistoric sites at Port au Choix, and Dr. Priscilla Renouf, Canada Research Chair, North Atlantic Archaeology, Department of Anthropology, Memorial University. Dr. Renouf's guided walk of Phillips Gardens helped us better understand how many of our early settlers lived and survived. The Paloeskimos and the maritime Archaic Indians have left a rich legacy behind for us to experience, learn about and pass on to others. We visited L'Anse aux Meadows and were Vikings for an afternoon. It was a treat for us to play a role in history. In period costumes we cooked, produced iron goods, currency and experimented with boat building. These people came to the Island because our resources were readily available. We also visited Red Bay, Labrador where we experienced the Basques whalers and the amazing whale industry that existed so many years ago. It was phenomenal to see what these early settlers were capable of doing. Dr. Jon Liem, Professor, Department of Psychology, Memorial University, gave us a real appreciation for the life these people lived.

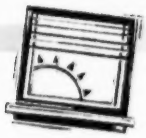
We experienced our culture as well. Traditional dishes were served for every meal – cod, moose, caribou, shrimp, jigs dinner, bake apples, partridge berries, just to name a few. We even got to eat without forks. Imagine eating roast with only a spoon – the Vikings did not have forks in their day. The hospitality of our people is something we can all be proud of. Those who served us went beyond the call of duty and we were truly treated like royalty. Thanks to the ladies in Red Bay who ran across the street to get molasses for the dough boys. Now that only happens in Newfoundland and Labrador!

The rich experiences and the enthusiasm that was displayed by all Parks Canada personnel, Drs. Renouf and Liem and Dr. Stephen Flemming, Manager, Ecosystem Science, has impressed on me the importance of communicating and having others experience first hand what you do. I returned to my classroom with a desire for my students to experience their learning. I know my students will have no other choice but learn in such a rich environment.

I've just put the finishing touches on a lesson plan for my students that incorporated this week of learning. I have been asked if I was in my right mind when I accepted a place in an Institute that required me to give up a week of summer vacation and spend time this fall working on a lesson plan to share with teachers. You bet I was! As one fellow teacher remarked when we parted ways, "I have been teaching for 28 years and this Institute was the highlight of my career." Hats off to Dorothy Parsons, Outreach Education Specialist, and her team from Parks Canada for providing us with such a wonderful lifetime experience. Our group experienced a life of the people, we discovered the richness of our land and made many new friends. This Institute was the best!

Helen Coleman is a teacher at St. Peter's Academy in Benoit's Cove.

Mr. Fred Sheppard, National Parks Interpreter with Parks Canada, giving a session on the geology of the Tablelands – an excellent example of mantle rock played a major role in the Theory of Platonic.



The Rain Will Fall on the Good and the Bad ... Then What?

by CLAUDETTE COOMBS

As we go through life we experience things which may cause us to question or assign some ultimate motive within the universe. For example, when things go terribly wrong and we see no logic or justification we ask, "Why would God let this happen?" A gambler will believe... I can win the jackpot if I stay at "my" machine or carry this lucky charm. We joke that we have bad luck because we broke a mirror or walked under a ladder. In reality, many things we experience in life happen as a result of a collection of events and conditions over which we have no control.

According to Matthew 5:45, *good, and not-so-good, things will happen to each of us.* This is independent of our behaviour, personalities, motivation or history. We sometimes assume that bad things have happened because we (or someone else) deserve(s) something bad to happen. Fortunately for us, it doesn't work that way. We aren't always rewarded with good when it might be deserved, nor must we endure all the bad that may also have been earned. Things can "just happen" beyond our control and influence.

Are we ever responsible for bringing on the rain?
We are quite capable of bringing a degree of comfort or difficulty upon ourselves by the choices we make. Although we may have influence over some of the things that occur in our lives, we do not control everything that happens to us. In some cases our choices cause a chain reaction of events which result in very negative consequences for us. In other cases our level of control is limited to our response to the things that come our way. When the rain falls, we must be careful to examine whether this particular rainfall was a result of our poor planning and choices, or a result of conditions outside our control.

Why do we stand in the rain?
Short term exposure to the pain and sadness around us can enhance our abilities to deal with the people and events that we encounter. This is helpful in generating an understanding of others and preparing ourselves to handle our own obstacles. Our interpersonal relationships become richer, our discipline and guidance become more supportive and our personal coping potential is magnified. The risk here is one of standing too long in the rain. Sharing in the distress of others is beneficial in gaining insight, but holding onto the distresses we experience can lead to a depressed view of life and may rob us of potential happiness and contentment.

Sometimes we surround ourselves with a cloud of negativity as a misguided means of self protection. We may adopt unhealthy mottos to live by such as: "If we don't expect much we won't be disappointed." Or, "If we expect the worst we can be pleasantly surprised when it doesn't happen." The real danger here is that we can create our own negative reality. If we look for or expect bad, then that's what we see.

How can we use the rain?
Have you ever been stopped in your tracks by a downpour? You know the kind, when you run under the shelter of a building or pull over to the side of the road just to wait it out. Those brief pauses can allow opportunity to reflect.

A collection of life's little (and big) adversities, all happening in the same time frame, can force us to put all else on hold until we are able to sort through the disorder.

A sudden appearance of health problems, coupled with the emotional realization of inevitable lifestyle modifications, is often the driving force for personal change. This forced pause may be just what is needed to encourage us to re-evaluate our lives, priorities and direction. With renewed motivation we can filter out what really does and does not matter in our lives. We can re-establish contacts, identify needed supports and begin a process of acquiring the resources we need to meet life's challenges.

After the rain, we can come out from under the shelter with a fresh outlook for our lives.

How can we prepare for the rain?
Many rainstorms can be predicted. Anticipating the predictable turbulence in our lives provides the opportunity

to plan for effective, healthy management. We know that exams and term reports pose their own unique stresses. We also know that changes in living arrangements, job positions and relationships will require added patience, planning and support. Unfortunately we sometimes don't pay enough attention to the potential impact of other anticipated events. The commencement or completion of our children's education, or the decreased independence of our parents require a new set of coping skills. For some people, these events happen all at once and the saying: "It never rains but it pours!" rings loudly. Minimizing that overwhelming sense of being caught in a downpour without an umbrella, takes planning!

To our own jeopardy, we tend to plan more for the positive things we expect than the negative things we dread. Often we resist talking or thinking about the things that we hope to avoid. It's as if we believe that if we don't talk about it or don't plan for it, then maybe it won't really happen. We even express the view that "talking about it *will* make it happen". We have certainly experienced the added pleasures of planning for something good. Christmas is so much more enjoyable when we select presents with a personal touch, start special family traditions and schedule time to spend with those we love. Furthermore, we likely have experienced the unnecessary confusion and discomfort of being faced with a demanding situation while having no plan. The irritation, annoyance, mistakes, wasted time and hurt all start to accumulate. The rain is streaming down.

When we anticipate events we are wise to take an inventory of our resources. This includes an assessment of our capacity in appropriate planning, personal and interpersonal coping skills and acquiring additional human and material support. A critical review of our strengths and weaknesses also puts us in a better position to identify our needs. When we determine the gaps, it is necessary to fill them.

Unfortunately, we are unable to anticipate some significant rain storms. For these, it is essential that we start out with maximum potential. That means always being prepared. Start out healthy – practice behaviours and routines which will promote and sustain good health. These include areas of nutrition, exercise, relaxation and self awareness. Adopt realistic personal goals and expectations. Maintain supportive relationships and fine tune skills in communication, conflict resolution and stress management. Finally, regularly perform a self analysis – know how you are feeling, how your needs are being met then quickly identify and correct any deficits.

Watch for the Rainbows

The optimistic side of us seeks to find a lesson or something of value in even the most difficult of times. That lesson may be hidden by our biases, fears, or rigid thinking. We lose sight of the potential for positive change if we become fixed on the idea that this rainfall is unfair, we didn't do anything to deserve this, or someone else is to blame. Of course it may be unfair. If we believe that life is supposed to be fair and we will accept nothing less, then we have lost before the rain even starts. Even when we follow all the rules and try to do everything right, bad things will still happen. That's the first lesson to learn. After we have mastered that one, we are ready to move on to others. Some lessons relate to ourselves and the new skills we cultivate. Other lessons relate to our understanding and acceptance of other people. Our challenge is to find and assimilate as many strands of the rainbow as possible.

Claudette is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Claudette Coombs (ext. 242) or Marie Wall (ext. 265).

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Young Canadians in a Wired World (Part II)

Are Our Kids Safe?

by CATHERINE SWIFT

"The survey also gave clear evidence that Canadian children and youth don't understand the importance of safeguarding their personal information."

The Media Awareness Network (MNet) has known for a long time that Canadian kids are among the biggest users of media, particularly the Internet. Last year MNet conducted a survey of 5,600 students aged 9 to 17 in schools across the country, and in June released findings that focused on the gap between parent's perceptions of their kids' online activities and what young people say they are actually doing online.

On October 24, 2001, MNet released a second phase of findings from *Young Canadians in a Wired World: The Students' View* which examined the extent to which Canadian youth are putting themselves at risk as they explore the Internet, often with little or no supervision.

This latest analysis focuses on specific areas of risky activity – such as exploring private and adult-only chat rooms, meeting Internet acquaintances in person, being exposed to sexually explicit and hateful material and sharing personal information.

The findings reveal the extent to which kids have claimed the Internet as their own world, separate from their parents' reach and knowledge. They may be technically savvy but are they safe, wise and responsible Internet users? Not always.

Nearly six in ten Canadian kids use chat rooms and twice as many secondary students as elementary students enjoy chatting online. The survey identified two high-risk chat behaviours – going into private chat areas to engage in one-on-one conversations, and visiting adult chat rooms which are designated for adults 18 years and over. Of the 56% of kids who use chat rooms, one third visit adult chat areas that often contain conversations of a sexually-explicit nature. The likelihood of this happening increases with age, but MNet sees a special problem with younger children who often lack the necessary judgement to safeguard themselves in these situations. Anne Taylor, Co-Director of MNet explains, "During focus group research, we asked 12 and 13 year old girls if they'd give their personal information to someone in a chat room. They replied that they would but only if they trusted that person. When we probed how long it might take to develop that trust, answers ranged anywhere from 15 minutes to two weeks!"

Eighty five percent of the children and youth who go into adult chat rooms and private areas of chat reveal that they are at home, but unsupervised when they use the Internet. Eighty-two percent of this group say they have no household rule relating to this practice (this compares to 39% of the overall sample who say they do have a rule about talking to strangers in chat rooms).

A key area of potential risk relates to kids meeting Internet friends in person. One quarter of all the young Internet users surveyed have been asked by someone they've met online to get together face-to-face. Approximately 15% (or 839 respondents of the total sample of nearly 6,000) indicated that they'd taken that next step and actually gone to meet an Internet acquaintance. Of those 800-odd students, 129 went by themselves to meet their Internet friend. Only 6% asked a parent or other adult to accompany them.

MNet acknowledges that these in-person meetings cover a wide range of scenarios and that some of these meetings were well supervised and positive. However, 100 of these young people characterized their meeting as a "bad experience." In response to an open-ended question, kids described these "bad experiences" in their own words, ranging from "didn't like the person" to person was "fat", "ugly", "stupid" or "mean." Some of the more serious responses, which came from 18 young people, included "person wanted/or made sexual contact", "person used vulgar/sexual language", and "person was violent." MNet hopes to broaden this initial research by further study into these troubling and potentially dangerous behaviours.

The survey probed the extent to which children and young people are exposed to pornography. Almost a quarter of students have received pornography from someone they have met online and over half have received pornographic junk mail. The vast majority (78%) of recipients did not tell their parents.

While a quarter of young people say they look online for pornography, 53% say they ended up on a porn site by accident. Most say they got to the site by doing a search for something else, or typing in the wrong address. Others got to the site by clicking on a

link given to them in a chat room or sent by email. Only 24% told a teacher or parent about it. The kids' replies indicate that they rely on their friends or their own ingenuity, rather than adults, when dealing with sexually explicit material.

Almost half of students at the secondary level say someone has made unwanted sexual comments to them on the Internet. Girls are more likely than boys to have received these kinds of comments.

Over a quarter of respondents of all ages report encountering hateful comments online and 16% of young Internet users say they have posted comments themselves that were hateful toward a person or group of people.

The survey also gave clear evidence that Canadian children and youth don't understand the importance of safeguarding their personal information. Almost one quarter of the youth surveyed indicated they would give out both their name and address to win a prize in an online contest. Most said they've got their own e-mail account, the majority of which are free Web-based accounts. When registering for these free accounts, 86% of youth indicated their gender, 68% provided their real name, 29% their address and 20% their phone number.

"We are concerned about the ways that Canadian children and youth are putting themselves at risk," says Jan D'Arcy, Co-Director of MNet. "At the same time, we're heartened by the fact that parental involvement, supervision and rules around the Internet appear to have an impact on how kids conduct themselves online."

The findings gleaned from the survey will play an integral role in shaping public policy on safe, wise and responsible Internet use in Canada. The data will also enhance the development of MNet resources such as the national Web Awareness Canada program and further work with active and committed partners in the public library, education and community sectors.

Catherine Swift is an independent consultant, and cheerleader for MNet, living in Ottawa. Part I of this article was featured in the September/October issue of "The Bulletin". Funding for this study was provided by the Government of Canada and data collection and analysis were conducted by Environics Research Group. For more information on the surveys cited in this article go to www.media awareness.ca/eng/webaware/netsurvey/index.htm.

FEBRUARY 14, 2002

JANEW AY DAY

An opportunity to teach children about the true value of helping others.

Every year, Janeway Day in the schools provides an opportunity for children in this province to help other children. In fact, since 1986, students and teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador have donated more than $630,000 to the Janeway. That's something for us to be proud of!

Make sure you participate in Janeway Day 2002; here's how:

BEFORE FEBRUARY 14TH...

Announce the project and explain what's involved.

If possible spend some time discussing the Janeway Hospital with your class or have a student who has been a patient at the hospital tell classmates about the experience.

ON FEBRUARY 14TH...

Ask students (and teachers) to forego the equivalent of recess monies for this one day. (That's their donation to the Janeway.)

AFTER FEBRUARY 14TH...

Principals should deposit the donations and write a cheque to their NLTA Branch President. Branch Presidents will then send a cheque to the NLTA (make out to "Janeway Day in the Schools Fund") by February 28th.

Note: To receive a receipt, give your name, address, and amount of donation to the principal with the money from your class, who will forward this information to the NLTA.

* If you are sending your donations directly to The Janeway, ***please*** indicate on your cheque "Janeway Day in the Schools".

Janeway Day in the Schools is an annual fundraising effort sponsored by the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association in conjunction with the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association. It is the only fundraising effort sponsored by the NLTA.

FSL Pilot Program Comes to a Close

CPF Observes Intensive Core French Success

by ARWA WHITFIELD

"Intensive core French students no longer see French as a foreign language, but as a part of school life and of Canadian culture."

Intensive core French in Newfoundland and Labrador is a pilot project evaluating the success of a new approach to the teaching of French as a second language (FSL) – an initiative which could eventually spread throughout Canada. It is a joint project of Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) and l'Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), under the direction of Joan Netten (Project Director, MUN) and Claude Germain (Co-Researcher, UQAM). Funded primarily by the Department of Canadian Heritage, with additional financial support from MUN and approval by the Department of Education, the project is coming to a close after a three-year period. Its implications for the teaching of core French have been wide-ranging.

As stated in *The Intensive Core French Project in Newfoundland and Labrador*, by Joan Netten and Claude Germain, intensive core French is defined as an enrichment of the core French program by the creation of a period of intensive exposure to French which enables students to receive three to four times the number of hours of instruction normally devoted to French, occurring in Newfoundland and Labrador at the Grade 6 level. The program possesses three main characteristics based on practical research studies that seek to establish the most effective ways of learning a second language: an intensive period of study; use of the target language as a means of communication; and a focus on language learning rather than on the learning of subject matter in the second language (as in immersion programs). The project (1998-2001) ran in two districts in the province – the Avalon East School Board and the Gander-Lewisporte School District – beginning with four classrooms and ending this year with 11.

"We were all very nervous in the beginning," comments Krista Gidge, a former intensive core French student of Newville Elementary. "But within a month or two nobody was nervous anymore. We could understand what the teacher was saying and we could respond in French both orally and in writing." The intensive exposure to French is achieved by compacting the regular English curriculum and creating a concentrated block of time in one semester of the school year, devoted exclusively to the learning of French. "The major goal of the curriculum development is to provide a rich language-learning environment for the students in hopes to improve the French language skills of core French students," explains Joan Netten. "We wanted to assist students to develop greater communicative competence in French, while at the same time improve accuracy. The students feel like they are truly experiencing the language, not simply studying it." Students having formerly completed the intensive French program in Grade 6 are now reading full French novels in their regular Grade 8 core French classroom. "It comes easily now," says Lorne Stuckey, former intensive core French student of Newville Elementary and member of SEVEC's (Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada) youth advisory council. Lorne was Newfoundland's sole representative at a national SEVEC conference held in Ottawa. "I was able to speak in French while I was there," says Lorne. "I felt proud." Lorne was accompanied by another youth representative from Labrador.

To maintain consistency in the Newfoundland and Labrador intensive core French program, significant attention had to be given to identify curriculum content and resources. The main objective was to select topics based on the interests of the students. This was explored through various activities and media, providing students with the opportunity to experience authentic communication which was meaningful to them. "We were motivated because of our teacher, Madame Stead," says one group of Grade 6 students from Topsail Elementary. "She was always energetic and we did lots of fun stuff in French like games, music, and 'centres' (centres included different French stations in the classroom involving the students in a variety of activities such as interviews, songs, art, reading, and games)." Other activities covered

in the Newfoundland and Labrador intensive core French classrooms included travel, movies, pen pals, plays, Internet activities, cultural activities – such as cooking, dancing, and French Olympics – French elections, and joke-telling. The use of a variety of means of personal expression was encouraged to respond to individual learning styles. "The parents were also very motivated," explains Chris Osmond, Principal of Newville Elementary. "They all showed great support for the program and were extremely involved in organizing our exchange trips. It was a real pleasure to have such parental involvement."

Several of the intensive core French classes had the opportunity to participate in one or more exchange trips throughout the last three years. This school year marked several exchanges throughout the province including one at St. Matthew's Elementary. This intensive core French class exchanged with an intensive English class from Baie Comeau, Quebec. As both classes congregated at the Confederation Building on May 29, 2001, a representative from each class welcomed the Minister of Education using both of Canada's official languages – the francophone student spoke in English, and the anglophone student, in French. "They are thoroughly enjoying themselves," says Kim Vokey, intensive core French teacher at St. Matthew's Elementary. "It's a real accomplishment for the students to be conversing among themselves in French. It seems to come so easily for them now." Students agree that they have had more opportunities in the intensive core French classroom than they might have had in the regular core French classroom. "The chance to travel, learn more about our Canadian heritage, make friends, live the French culture, and speak French…not every class gets to do this in school," says Lorne Stuckey, who also participated in an exchange trip with his class and a class from St. Romuald, Quebec. "We were lucky!"

After the first year of the pilot project (1998-99) teachers were aware of the massive second language growth that had occurred with students. Scores for any testing completed were far above anything core French teachers had ever seen in regular core French. "As the year went on, and subsequently the following years, I started to notice other things happening to my students," explains Sid Woolfrey, intensive core French teacher at Newville Elementary. According to Mr. Woolfrey, a variety of side effects have been observed from students completing the program. "Students who normally had been very low functioning in English language were now doing well in their second language," he says. Mr. Woolfrey also noticed several other factors: as FSL success occurred, the self esteem of students started to rise; a sense of self confidence developed in students; students became more autonomous, undertaking more independent work in French at home and in class; a greater sense of "class identity" began to develop; students attained a feeling of maturity as they developed their interpersonal skills; school moral was boosted; "curriculum transfer"– students that experienced a rise in self esteem started to improve performance in other subject areas – was evident; and students felt a sense of program ownership.

The question of follow-up to the intensive core French program was also an implication of the completion of this project in Newfoundland and Labrador. Depending on access to options, students have three paths from which to choose after completing the program. They may follow an enriched core French at Grade 7, they may be integrated into late French immersion, or they may continue the regular core French program. "One of our main aims is to have students continue with some sort of FSL training in their secondary schooling, whether it be in immersion or in core French," says Joan Netten. "I am pleased to say that this has occurred so far in most cases."

Why all the fuss? What is the true value of learning French? The answers are numerous. "Why not go for it," says Petter Hurich, intensive core French student at Topsail Elementary. "If the opportunity is there it seems like the right thing to do." When intensive core French students were asked why they were learning French, they came up with several ideas: "We'll be able to get good jobs if we speak French; we can travel to French places and communicate with the people there; friends – we have made and will make good friendships; we'll be able to learn other languages now that we know French – we won't be afraid to try; we have more knowledge now of Canada's culture and of francophone culture in general; university – we'll be able to study French at university; we'll have lots more opportunities in life knowing two languages over one." Just to name a few…

The Department of Canadian Heritage has recently proposed that by the year 2010, one out of two Canadian youth be bilingual upon graduation from high school. The intensive core French project is another step in this direction as it encourages students of all learning abilities to participate in the FSL experience. According to researcher Claude Germain, the effects of intensive core French appear to be even more positive than anticipated. Intensive core French students no longer see French as a foreign language, but as a part of school life and of Canadian culture. "It's making our schools in Newfoundland and Labrador more noticeable," says Fallon Smith, former intensive core French student at Newville Elementary, "not only throughout the province but all across Canada."

Arwa Whitfield is Communications/Research Officer with Canadian Parents for French Newfoundland & Labrador.

HUMANITIES SIC CONFERENCE (IN CONJUNCTION WITH HOME ECONOMICS)

April 18-20, 2002

Airport Inn, St. John's. Theme: *Nurturing Tomorrow's Citizens Today*. Contact: Jed Butt, Tel: 709-364-1522 (s); 709-364-2848 (h); Fax: 709-364-1871; E-mail: gbutt@panther.k12.nf.ca.

BREAKTHROUGH STRATEGIES TO TEACH AND COUNSEL TROUBLED YOUTH™ WORKSHOP

May 2-3, 2002

Mount Peyton Hotel, Grand Falls-Windsor. During the two-day workshop, participants will learn 200 strategies to help deal with challenging students. Contact Keith Adey, Tel: 709-489-5796.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' COUNCIL ANNUAL CONFERENCE & AGM

May 29-31, 2002

Terra Nova Golf Resort, Port Blandford. Theme: *Finding the Balance*. Contact Rick Thorne, Tel: 709-547-2379, Fax: 709-547-2549; E-mail: rthorne@stemnet.nf.ca.

SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR TEACHERS OF CANADIAN HISTORY

July 7-14, 2002

St. John's. *Stepping into History, Strategies for Bringing History Alive!* Located at Memorial University, this institute will focus on providing 40 elementary and middle grade school teachers from across Canada with hands-on training in the use of selected programs and activities that integrate history education into their classroom plans. Participants will benefit from the rich historical setting of Newfoundland, and a first-hand look at Historica's National Heritage Fair programme running in tandem with the Institute. For more information, Tel: 1-800-567-1867, or apply online at www.histori.ca.

LABRADOR WEST, LABRADOR CITY AND WABUSH COME HOME YEAR

July 20-27, 2002

A number of activities have already been planned with more to follow. Visit the web site at www.labwest2002.net and make plans to attend this great event.

Dates/Deadlines

January 2002

Jan 11-12	NLTA Executive Meeting
Jan 15	Deadline: Bancroft Award Nominations
Jan 17	Deadline: Professional Development Fund applications

February 2002

Feb 1	Deadline: Applications for Educational Leave - teachers must make prior application to school board
Feb 14	Janeway Day in the Schools
Feb 21	NLTA Executive Meeting
Feb 22-23	Joint Council Meeting

March 2002

Mar 3-9	Education Week
Mar 21	Deadline: Professional Development Fund applications
Mar 31	Board Deadline: Notice for retirement at end of school year
Mar 31	Deadline for Applications: Centennial Study Award; Centennial Project Award; Educational Research Award; International Conference Presenters Program; International Programs Award

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CHRISTMAS HOURS

Please be advised that the NLTA Building will be closed from December 24th to January 1st (inclusive) to allow staff to enjoy the holiday season.